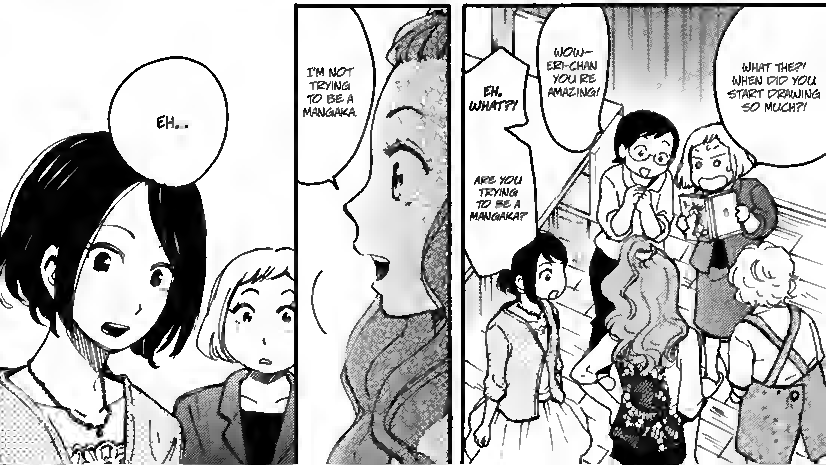
CHAP TER 3

GO-!!
YOU CAN DO IT-!!
Kyaaa
ERI-CHAN IS SO FAST, SHE GOT SECOND!
IT'S AMAZING HOW SHE CAN KEEP UP WITH OOISHI-SAN FROM THE TRACK AND FIELD CLUB
AND SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WITH SUCH A COMPOSED EXPRESSION!
PHEW
2
3

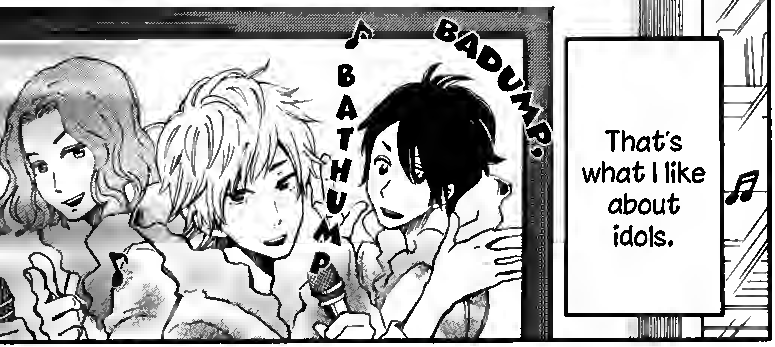
89
TOKITOU.
It sounds bad to say this about myself, but
(MATH) ANSWER SHEET
(TOKITOU ERI)
89
and I'm pretty good at everything no matter what I try,
I'm skillful
sports,
ERI-RIN, YOU'RE SO GOOD AT DRAWING.
and studies, too.
After I entered high school
I tried sending my manga out for submission.
Do your Homies!

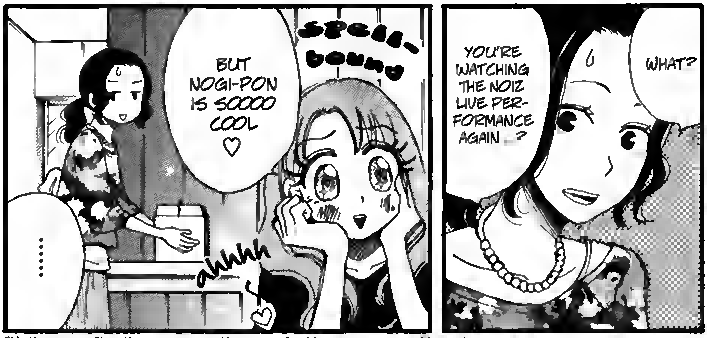
TN: I don't know why it says manga school, it seems like a contest for amateurs/kids.


EH...
I'M NOT TRYING TO BE A MANGAKA.
EH, WHAT?!
WOW~ ERI-CHAN YOU'RE AMAZING!
WHAT THE?! WHEN DID YOU START DRAWING SO MUCH?!
ARE YOU TRYING TO BE A MANGAKA?

Once I made results I could be satisfied with,
I lost interest.
FOR NOW,
I'VE ACCOMPLISHED MY GOAL.
It was the same with love.
ERI-
Once I was satisfied that my feelings were conveyed to my partner,
suddenly those feelings would cool off.

Never once did I make it to the next step.
ACTUALLY, I CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT GOING OUT.
I BROUGHT CAKE—
KACHA
FOR YOU
FOR YOU
swaying
My heart is
for you
my feelings

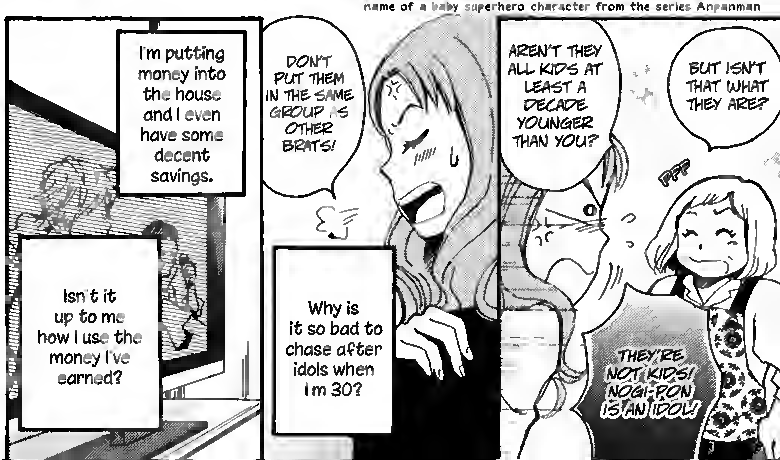




TN: the -pon after the name is another way of addressing someone like -chan or -san

IT MUST BE NICE TO BE SO CAREFREE, HUH-
WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE
I WAS GOING THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE TO RAISE YOU TWO.
ANNOYED
YEAH, YEAH, I'VE HEARD THAT A HUNDRE TIMES ALREAD
I'M TELLING YOU, YOU'RE ALMOST 30, YOU KNOW?
IT'S REALLY NOT THE TIME FOR YOU TO KEEP ON CHASING AFTER THOSE BABIES'.
fwp
HEY, WOULD YOU STOP CALLING THEM BABIES?!

TN: She actually calls them "Aka-chan-man" (literally Baby-Man) The name of a baby superhero character from the series Anpanman


BUT ISN'T THAT WHAT THEY ARE?
AREN'T THEY ALL KIDS AT LEAST A DECADE YOUNGER THAN YOU?
PPP
THEY'RE NOT KIDS! NOGI-RON IS AN IDOL!
DON'T PUT THEM IN THE SAME GROUP AS OTHER BRATS!
Why is it so bad to chase after idols when I'm 30?
I'm putting money into the house and I even have some decent savings.
Isn't it up to me how I use the money I've earned?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT, MAMA,
YEAH! IT'S A CHAPEL IN NANKOU WITH A GARDEN.
A CHAPEL MEANS A CHURCH? I WANT TO SEE, TOO.
GRANDMA, YOU CAN COME TOO! IT'S REALLY BEAUTIFUL.
DID YOU FIND A GOOD PLACE?
NEXT WEEK, I'M GOING TO VISIT THE WEDDING VENUE, SO DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH ME?
I heard from my mother
ahahaha
that she got into a job as a college administrator because of the easy acceptance rate,
but with just one word from my father, she quit and got married.
Then soon after she gave birth to my older sister and me, she got divorced.
CLICK
CLICK
After that, she came back to her home-town and found a job at a local rundown office here.
She's been working there while complaining for the last 20 years.

there's no way I think my mom could be happy with her life that was one failure after another.
Honestly...
TOKITOU.
DID YOU FINISH THE LOGO FOR CRYSTAL SHOP?
AHH,
I FINISHED THAT ONE AND SENT IT OFF YESTERDAY.
OH, AS EXPECTED OF YOU, TOKITOU.
RATHER THAN THAT, ONO-SAN. DID YOU RECEIVE THE FILE FROM ABE-SAN, YET?
HE SAID THAT HE SENT IT LAST WEEK.
AH...!
I FORGOT..
YOU'RE A FAST WORKER!
PLEASE PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
WE'RE ALREADY PAST THE DEADLINE.
SORRY, SORRY.

Jeez...
YOU WOULD NEVER GUESS BY LOOKING THAT HE'S YOUR BOSS.
!
IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU BECAME THE CHIEF, TOKITOU-SAN.
HUH?
A CONTRACT EMPLOYEE LIKE ME CAN'T BECOME A CHIEF.
YOU HAVE TO RENEW YOUR CONTRACT EVERY YEAR,
SO I THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU TO BECOME A COMPANY EMPLOYEE, THOUGH.
NO WAY.
IF I BECAME A FULL TIME EMPLOYEE,
I'D HAVE MORE RESPON-SIBILITIES
AND I DON'T EVEN LIKE THIS JOB TO BEGIN WITH.

UM... TOKITOU-SAN...
TODAY, ARE YOU FREE AT ALL...?
?
ACTUALLY THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.
SORRY BUT TODAY'S NO GOOD.
A MEETING...
YOU MEAN THAT THING WHERE PEOPLE WHO LIKE IDOLS ALWAYS GO MEET UP TOGETHER...?
YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT?
I HAVE A MEETING.
AH.. NO..

EVEN FROM A GUY'S POINT OF VIEW, YOU THINK SO TOO, EDA-KUN?!
FWP
NOGI FROM NOIZ.
HE'S PRETTY APPEALING, HUH.
HE'S GOOD AT DANCING AND SINGING SO I THOUGHT HE MUST BE PRETTY TALENTED...
HMM. I GUESS.
HE HAS SUCH A HIGH SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM!!
NOGI-PON IS THE MOST TALENTED OUT OF ALL THE MEMBERS,
THAT'S RIGHT, THAT'S RIGHT-
Even if he's 16 years old
a pro is a pro.
AAAAAA

From my point of view he's much more of an adult than those middle aged guys who do their jobs half-heartedly.

KURARA-SAN, YOU GOT TICKETS FOR NOIZ'S CONCERT FOR BOTH DAYS?!

HUH?!

SO IT'S GOTTEN HARD TO GET TICKETS EVEN IF YOU TRY A FEW TIMES.

RECENTLY NOIZ HAS GOTTEN SUPER POPULAR,

THERE USED TO BE SO MANY TICKETS THEY HAD EXTRA-

OF COURSE I'M GOING, I'M GOING!!

ERI-SAN YOU'RE GOING FOR BOTH DAYS ALSO, RIGHT?

YEAH,

I FAILED TO GET TICKETS FOR 5 DIFFERENT CONCERTS SO I HAD ALREADY GIVEN UP.

I'M SO GLAD~~

quiver

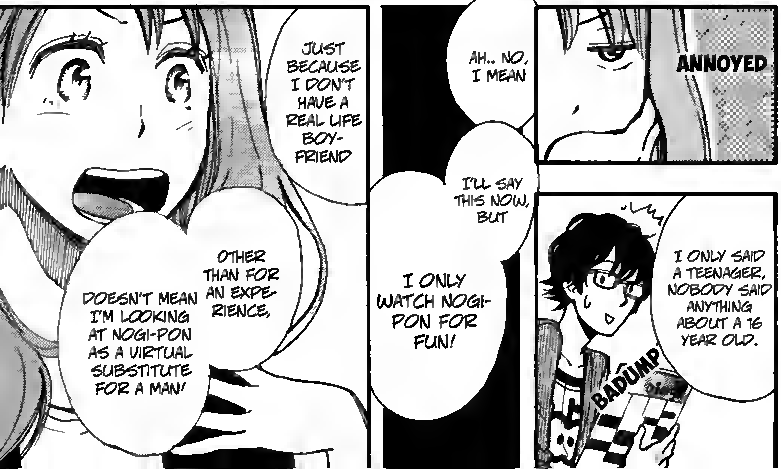
CHOMP
CHOMP
ACTUALLY RECENTLY,
MY OLDER SISTER DECIDED TO GET MARRIED, AND SINCE I'M GONNA BE 30 SOON,
MY MOM IS BEING SUPER ANNOYING ABOUT IT--
ERI-SAN, YOU STILL LIVE WITH YOUR FAMILY, RIGHT?
I LIVE WITH MINE TOO. SO ON THE DAYS WHEN I GET THE BLUE ENVELOPE THEY ALL MAKE MEAN COMMENTS--
SAME HERE, SAME HERE!
AYA-CHAN, DON'T YOU LIVE WITH YOUR FAMILY, TOO?
THEY DON'T BOTHER YOU?
BADUMP
HUH...
GLANCES
NOD
...
ACTUALLY...
I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU GUYS...

M... MARRIED?!
HUUUH-HHHHH...
I'M THE OLDEST OF THIS GROUP, AND I'M ALMOST HO, YOU KNOW?
I THOUGHT IF I DIDN'T DO SOMETHING SOON I'D BE IN TROUBLE.
SO I WENT TO A MARRIAGE COUNSEL.
WHA...
ACTUALLY IT WAS HARD FOR ME TO TELL EVERYONE.
BUT I'VE DECIDED TO GET MARRIED, TOO
It's gotta be... a lie...
AH... BUT
I'LL STILL BE A FAN.
LET'S KEEP MEETING UP LIKE ALWAYS, OK?

Now that I think of it,
"Even if I get married I won't stop being a fan."
"I'll keep going to concerts,
and I'll come to our meetings, too."
last year there was someone else
who said those things after getting married.
Within a month she got pregnant,
and we totally lost contact with her...
BADUMP
BADUMP
BATHUMP
ARE YOU WATCHING THOSE BABIES AGAIN?
I'LL SAY THIS NOW, BUT
FROM THOSE KIDS' POINT OF VIEW YOU'RE AN OLD LADY.
In 10 years I'll be 40.
In 20 years I'll be 50.

And in 20 years he'll still be 36.
But in 10 years Nogi-pon will still only be 26.
♪
♪
This feeling...
when I think about it I feel so hopeless.
I wonder why...

I WONDER IF A WOMAN OVER 30 MUST SEEM LIKE AN OLD LADY.
FROM A TEENAGER'S POINT OF VIEW,
HEY...
HMMM. .
FROM A 16 YEAR OLD'S POINT OF VIEW,
I GUESS IT WOULD, MORE OR LESS.


JUST BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE A REAL LIFE BOY-FRIEND
OTHER THAN FOR AN EXPE-RIENCE,
DOESN'T MEAN I'M LOOKING AT NOGI-PON AS A VIRTUAL SUBSTITUTE FOR A MAN!
AH.. NO, I MEAN
I'LL SAY THIS NOW, BUT
I ONLY WATCH NOGI-PON FOR FUN!
ANNOYED
I ONLY SAID A TEENAGER, NOBODY SAID ANYTHING ABOUT A 16 YEAR OLD.
BADUMP

BEING LOOKED AT WITH SUCH SCORNFUL EYES, LIKE, "LOOK AT THAT LONELY WOMAN"
REALLY PISSES ME OFF!
pff
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN,
I GUESS YOU DON'T REALIZE. OR,
Huhhh-hhhh?!
TOKI-TOU-SAN, YOU'RE CUTE.
WELL, THAT PART IS WHAT MAKES YOU CHARMING, THOUGH.
BLUSH!!!

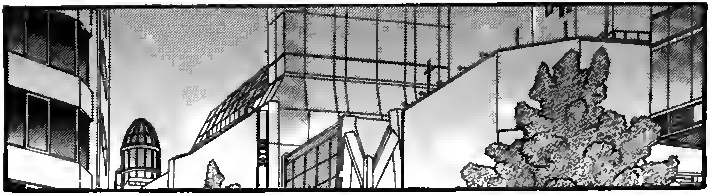
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M BEAUTIFUL AT ALL
AND I'LL BE DAMNED IF I'M CHARMING.
C...
COULD YOU STOP SAYING SUCH WEIRD THINGS?!
He says I'm "cute"...!
He says I'm "cute."

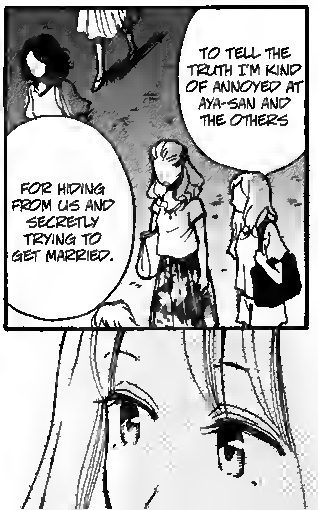
How many years has it been since I've been told that...
glances
BADUMP
FWP
Eek-
?

Something like that has to be lip service.
"Tokitou-san, you're cute."
KENTOOOOOO
NOGI-POOOOON
SUZUUUUUU
NOGI-POOOOON!
KYAAAAAA
NOGI-POOOOOON
KYAAAAAAAAA
BADUMP
BATHUMP
NOGI
WHA...
Boo
UMU

For just a second Nogi-pon looked like Eda-kun.
GYAAAAAAA
LOVE ノギ NOIZ
ERI-SAN?
I'm just a desperate woman...
Like this, no matter how you look at it
It... it's no good...!
Just one little compliment from that guy made me so conscious of him.
AAAAAA
I spent so much time away from love that
KYAAAA

Get yourself together! Eri!





If I were still in my early 20s
"Even if we don't get married,
let's always cheer for Nogi-pon!!"
I would be able to say something stupid like that, but
I'm already turning 30,
so I can't say those kinds of things so easily...
THEN I'LL CALL YOU AGAIN
More More M

EDA-KUN...?!
CLATTER

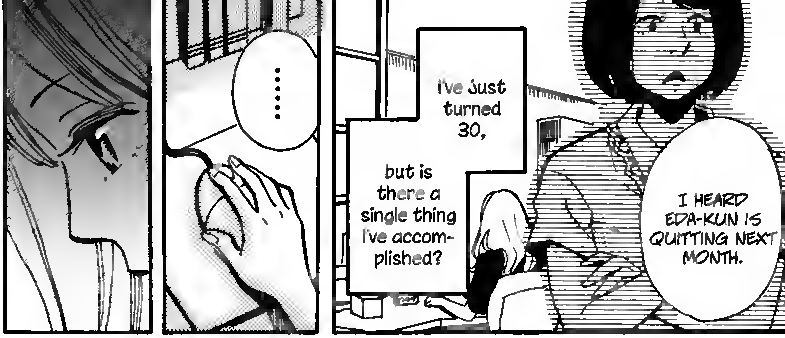
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU DID JUGGLING.
YOU SURPRISED ME.
IN COLLEGE I SPENT ABOUT A YEAR ABROAD IN EUROPE.
I STARTED DOING IT THEN...
YES...
I THOUGHT YOU WENT ON VACATION ABROAD, BUT YOU WERE ACTUALLY DOING THAT?!
WAS THAT AROUND SEPTEMBER?!
SORRY...
LAST YEAR I MADE IT TO 6TH PLACE IN THE WORLD COMPETITION.
EHHH?!
YOU WERE SO MUCH MORE LIVELY THAN WHEN YOU'RE AT WORK.
RATHER THAN THAT, EDA-KUN,
AREN'T YOU MORE SUITED TO DOING SOMETHING LIKE THIS INSTEAD OF WORKING?

ACTUALLY I'M THINKING OF QUITTING WORK.
Slurp
HMMM...
EHH?!
I THOUGHT I'D TRY TO BECOME A STREET PERFORMER FOR REAL.
Eh... wait... you're going to quit work and be a street performer?!
YES.

I'M ALMOST 30, BUT
I REALIZED THAT I STILL HAVEN'T ACCOMPLISHED ANYTHING.
BUT
ISN'T IT DIFFICULT TO MAKE A LIVING OFF OF JUST STREET PERFORMING...
I CAN LIVE FOR A LITTLE WHILE OFF THE MONEY I'VE SAVED UP.
SO I'M THINKING OF GOING ABROAD TO STUDY.

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M REALLY WISHING FOR.
IF I STAY AT THE OFFICE I CAN GET ALONG OKAY WORKING AND LIVING THIS STABLE LIFE-STYLE, BUT—
……

Eda-kun
announced the next day that something came up so after next month he'll stop working.
I WANT TO TEST MY BOUNDARIES.



The reason Nogi-pon seems to sparkle isn't just because he's an idol I can never have.

He chases after the future without fear of failing.

Isn't that the real reason I'm so taken with him?

Chapter 3 - End

Soshite, Hare ni Naru

Tendo Kirin

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